The Trump, Navarro, Lighthizer 'Iron Triangle'

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China is getting fully prepared to reciprocate if the proposed US tariffs on $34 billion Chinese exports go into effect on July 6.  
China has said that its comprehensive retaliation measures will match those of the US both in quantity and quality, as the two largest economies are on the verge of a trade war.  
China has long stated that it does not want a trade war and won't fire the first shot because no one will emerge as a winner in a trade war. Once the trade war breaks out, China and the US and people of the entire world stand to be the biggest losers.  
However, only three people don't seem to believe this. In their minds, sustaining US hegemony, pursuing excessive personal power and self-interest far outweigh the strong opposition of the US business community and the public, as well as the interests and wellbeing of the people in the entire world.  
The Trump administration has been haunted by constant infighting and political chaos since taking office in January 2017. On its trade policy toward China, trade hawks such as US Trade Representative Bob Lighthizer and White House trade adviser Peter Navarro stand in sharp contrast to moderates represented by Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross.  
After several rounds of fierce battles, it has become clear that those trade hawks have gained an upper hand. Trump, Lighthizer and Navarro have formed the "White House Iron Triangle", imposing tariffs on US trade partners that they believe have taken advantage of the United States. China has become a major target.  
As a real-estate-man-turned-president, Trump campaigned in the 2016 presidential election by exploiting populist sentiment. He has made China as the bogeyman and vowed to bring back the jobs that he claimed have been stolen by China.  
After taking office, Trump has pledged to keep his campaign promise in a bid to retain his core supporters, especially ahead of the midterm election later this year and the 2020 presidential election.  
With such a mindset, "US trade tsar" Lighthizer and "China threat" advocator Navarro have become Trump's best friends in fulfilling his mission. All of them believe that trade is a zero sum game. Thus, the only three Americans who want to wage a trade war against China have finally banded together.  
However, they are completely wrong in believing that China will simply surrender under their coercion and blackmail. While Lighthizer is known for forcing the Japanese to sign the Plaza Accord in the mid 1980s, he has not realized that China is not Japan, and the year 2018 is also totally different from 1985. Replicating what he had tried in the 1980s has proved futile.  
Navarro, who has kept accusing China of economic aggression, never made a trip to China until 2018. He has been described by US experts and mainstream media as lacking basic understanding why there is a trade imbalance between China and the US.  
While Americans marked their July Fourth Independence Day this week, what is ironic is that the Trump administration has completely abandoned the "free trade" and "open society" policies that the US has followed for more than 200 years. The traditional values established by American Founding Fathers have also been ditched by the "White House Iron Triangle".  
The US today has increasingly become "isolationist" and a "closed society", signs of the US decline as many have pointed out.

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